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## Viewing cable 06BERN1971, EUR A/S FRIED AND SWISS STATE SECRETARY AMBUHL \

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### Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

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### Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#06BERN1971**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
06BERN1971	2006-10-23 08:56	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Bern

Appears in these articles:

[www.letemps.ch/swiss\\_papers](http://www.letemps.ch/swiss_papers)

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VZCZCXRO7014
PP RUEHBC RUEHDBU RUEHDE RUEHDIR RUEHFL RUEHKUK RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHROV
RUEHSR
DE RUEHSW #1971/01 2960856
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 230856Z OCT 06
FM AMEMBASSY BERN
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3308
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE
RUCNIRA/IRAN COLLECTIVE
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82783 2006-10-23 08:56:00 06BERN1971 Embassy Bern CONFIDENTIAL 06BELGRADE1566|06BERN1867|06BERN1876|06PRISTINA833 VZCZCXRO7014\
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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3308\
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE\
RUCNIRA/IRAN COLLECTIVE C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 05 BERN 001971 \
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/22/2016 \
TAGS: PREL PTER KNNP EAID SZ
SUBJECT: EUR A/S FRIED AND SWISS STATE SECRETARY AMBUHL \
LAUNCH COMPREHENSIVE POLITICAL DIALOGUE -- MULTIPLE \
DELIVERABLES \
\
REF: A. BELGRADE 1566 \
      B. PRISTINA 833 \
      C. BERN 1867 \
      D. BERN 1876 \
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Classified By: DCM Carol Urban, Reasons 1.4 b/d \

1.(C) Summary: In the first round of official political level \
talks under the recently inaugurated Framework for Enhanced \
Political Cooperation, EUR A/S Dan Fried and Swiss State \
Secretary Michael Ambuehl identified a number of specific \

SIPDIS \
areas for closer cooperation. Areas discussed included \
regional stabilization in the Balkans, Middle East, and \
Sudan; security and counter-terror cooperation; promotion of \
mutual economic interests; disaster relief; educational \
exchanges; and UN reform. The Swiss offered specific \
proposals for cooperation. For Ambuehl, a formal Framework \
is important in that it regularizes bilateral consultations \
and, as much as getting the USG's attention, it serves as a \
means to ensure that Ambuehl's boss -- Foreign Minister \
Calmy-Rey -- and their Swiss colleagues get into the habit of \
thinking about cooperating with Washington. End summary. \

2.(C) Assistant Secretary Fried conducted the first \
high-level dialogue on enhanced bilateral political \
cooperation with Ambuehl on September 29. Participants \
included officials from the Swiss Departments of Foreign \
Affairs, Economic Affairs, Finance, and Defense, along with \
Ambassador Conaway, DCM, Pol/Econ officers, and visiting \
EUR/AGS desk officer. \

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Pre-Meeting: Iran & the Balkans \
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3.(C) In a meeting A/S Fried and Ambassador Coneway prior to \ the plenary session, Ambuehl offered his views on the Iran \ situation and reiterated Switzerland's standing offer to \ facilitate talks with Tehran. A/S Fried thanked Ambuehl for \ Switzerland's efforts as Protecting Power for the United \ States in Tehran and emphasized the need for the \ international community to show solidarity against Iranian \ intransigence on the nuclear issue. \

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4.(C) During this pre-meeting, Foreign Minister Micheline \ Calmy-Rey dropped by to welcome A/S Fried. Noting that she \ was one of the first European leaders to call for Kosovo's \ independence, Calmy-Rey expressed particular interest in A/S \ Fried's just-completed visit to Serbia and Kosovo. Fried \ reviewed his message to Serbian and Kosovar leaders, adding \ that KFOR members, including the U.S. and Switzerland, should \ be prepared to beef up their presence during the first part \ of the transition in 2007. Calmy-Rey explained that \ Switzerland currently deployed about 200 troops out of the \ 250 currently authorized for peace operations abroad, but was \ in the process of enlarging deployable forces to 500 by 2008. \ (Comment: The Swiss Parliament has authorized a maximum of \ 220 for SwissCoy in Kosovo; any increase would require \ Parliamentary approval, usually a time-consuming process. \ End comment.) \

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Framework for Enhanced Bilateral Cooperation \

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5.(C) Ambuehl opened the plenary with a statement hailing the \ Framework Agreement for Enhanced Political Cooperation (the \ U.S.-Swiss MOU signed in May 2005) as providing a "legal \ basis" under Swiss law for closer cooperation between the two \ countries. He said that both sides had exhibited excellent \ cooperation in the adoption of the Third Additional Protocol \ to the Geneva Conventions and the acceptance of the Israeli \ Magan David Adom in the International Red Cross, Red Crescent \ Movement. Ambuehl also noted that the U.S. and Switzerland \ share "mostly the same objectives," though often with \ different strategies, due to the distinct global roles \ played: the U.S. as sole superpower and Switzerland as \ (almost) sole neutral. \

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Balkans: Swiss Program Proposals for Kosovo \

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6.(C) A/S Fried provided a detailed report of his visit \ earlier that week to Belgrade, Pristina, and Mitrovica \ (reftels a and b): The next few weeks were going to be \ difficult; the situation in Kosovo will only deteriorate \ unless action is taken. Thus, the USG and the Quint \ concluded that the status issue must be finalized and the \ final status must be independence. According to A/S Fried, \

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both ethnic Serbs and Albanians realize this, however \ unenthusiastic the Serb leadership felt. Encouragingly, Serb \ students in Belgrade and even moderate Serb community leaders \ in Mitrovica seemed prepared to move on. To hold-outs, such \ as President Kostunica and Foreign Minister Draskovic, A/S \ Fried's message was that their reluctance must not translate \ into obstructionism or violence, or else Belgrade's European \ ambitions would be drastically set back. \

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7.(SBU) Addressing Switzerland as a participant in KFOR, A/S \ Fried emphasized his hope that when KFOR needed more troops, \ Switzerland would be there. State Secretary Ambuehl advised \ that Switzerland's analysis of Kosovo was completely in line \ with that of the U.S. Switzerland supported independence \ soon, under the right conditions. He described the Balkans \ as a prime place for U.S.-Swiss cooperation in areas of good \ governance and "transitional justice." Swiss DFA Human \ Security director Thomas Greminger described Swiss thinking \ on decentralization and transitional justice and noted that \ the Swiss had presented a menu of maximal and minimal program \ proposals to Kosovo Coordinator Ahtisaari and the European \ Commission (EC) and would be interested in USG views (paper \ handed to EUR/AGS desk officer). A/S Fried and Ambuehl \ agreed to that an expert level group would review the Swiss \ proposal and meet in either Washington or Bern to define \ areas of bilateral cooperation on transitional justice and \ other good-governance issues. \

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Sudan \

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8.(SBU) Moving on to Sudan, Ambuehl recalled that \ Switzerland and the United States had worked together in 2002 \ to mediate the North-South Agreement. Ambuehl laid out three \ areas of current Swiss activity: demarcating the north/south \ boundary; assisting the regional government of southern Sudan \ in mediation with the Lords Resistance Army; and helping the \ SPLA militia transition into a civil force. A/S Fried \ replied that he was aware that the Swiss had discussed with \ EUCOM officers the idea of bilateral cooperation. He said he \ would take the Swiss ideas to State's AF Bureau and would \ speak with EUCOM Combatant Commander General Jones about the \ Swiss proposal and potential for cooperation. \

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Detainees \

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9.(SBU) A/S Fried opened the discussion of the \ detainee/renditions issue by recommending to the Swiss the \ recent Financial Times article by State Department Legal \

Advisor Bellinger. A/S Fried stressed the fundamental \ points: terrorists want to kill civilians in our countries, \ and the Geneva Conventions -- while adequate for conventional \ war -- were not designed for the current threat. On \ renditions, A/S Fried noted that several countries had used \ this method to bring criminals to justice -- for example, \ France with Carlos the Jackal, and Turkey with PKK leader \ Abdullah Ocalan. Those insisting on treating terror suspects \ as POWs are not factoring in that, under Geneva, detainees \ should be held until the end of hostilities; indeed the \ closest parallel to terrorists in the Geneva Conventions \ would be "spies and saboteurs," who do not merit POW \ protection. A/S Fried stressed that the United States was \ not trying to "bend the rules," rather trying to "get it \ right." \

10.(SBU) Christine Schraner, DFA deputy chief for \ international public law, stressed that Switzerland took the \ fight against terrorism seriously. Switzerland was seeking \ the proper balance between counterterrorism and human rights. \ She welcomed progress in the UN 1267 Committee on \ de-listing, citing recent UN discussions and a well-received \ Swiss co-sponsored study conducted with the Watson Institute \ at Brown University. Ambuehl asked that the USG understand \ Switzerland's role as guardians of international law. He \ suggested that Ambassador Bellinger agree to meet with his \ Swiss counterpart, Ambassador Paul Seger, to discuss the \ issues of detainees and renditions, as well as the listing \ and delisting of terrorist entities. A/S Fried said he would \ pass the request on to Ambassador Bellinger. \

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Property Rights as Human Rights \

11.(SBU) State Secretary Ambuehl presented A/S Fried with a \ copy of a Swiss-sponsored book "Realizing Property Rights," \ co-authored by Peruvian economist Hernando DeSoto. The \

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Swiss, Ambuehl said, would like to co-sponsor with the U.S. a \ workshop on the subject. The issue was particularly \ pertinent in the developing world. A/S Fried replied that he \ would want to see how the notion of property rights as \ fundamental human rights conformed to the need to seize \ terrorist and criminal assets and fight kleptocracy, but \ agreed to raise the proposal with Under Secretary Paula \ Dobriansky. \

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Intelligence Sharing \

12.(C) Additional areas where traditional structures were \ challenged by terrorism were law enforcement cooperation and \ intelligence sharing, according to A/S Fried. Reviewing the \ message delivered by S/CT Crumpton on September 7 (reftel c), \ A/S Fried emphasized that the updated U.S.-Swiss operative \ working agreement on counter-terrorism cooperation would only \ be as valuable as the cooperation it fostered. The Swiss \ needed to share more broadly the intelligence they develop. \ Swiss DFA Security Policy Director Jacques Pitteloud pointed \ out that September 11 had found Switzerland even less \ prepared than the U.S. to face the new threat. In \ Switzerland, counterterrorism had traditionally been a purely \ law enforcement matter. The key to producing more \ intelligence information was first to develop better \ intelligence services. Both sides agreed on the importance \ of ensuring the success of intelligence and law enforcement \ cooperation. \

13.(SBU) In the broader area of bilateral counterterrorism \ cooperation, Ambuehl and Pitteloud both praised the \ U.S.-Swiss sponsored "Black Ice" bioterrorism exercise held \ September 7-8 in Montreux, which brought senior leaders of \ international organizations together for the first time on \ this issue. Pitteloud expressed strong support for a \ follow-up conference. A/S Fried and Embassy Bern agreed to \ pursue the idea with Black Ice Conference organizers. \

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Disaster Relief \

14.(SBU) Describing an ongoing Swiss Development Agency \ project to assess hazards and risks. Ambuehl promised to \ provide the USG a copy of the "risk mapping" exercise \ identified areas of potential flooding, landslides, \ avalanches, desertification, soil erosion, and other risks. \ A/S Fried recommended that, in assessing the potential risks, \ the Swiss also incorporate a data base of the PfP assets \ available. A/S Fried asserted that Switzerland was in an \ optimal position among NATO partners to develop a data base \ of partner assets to respond to such natural disasters as the \ Kashmir earthquake or a tsunami. The upcoming Riga NATO \ Summit would be addressing "NATO in the World;" Swiss efforts \ targeting humanitarian disasters could sell well within the \ neutrality-conscious Swiss public. Ambuehl agreed. \

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Financial Sanctions Implementation Group \

15.(SBU) Turning to economic relations, Ambuehl regretted \ that the "time had seemed not to be right" on a full Free \ Trade Agreement, but hoped that the proposal could be revived \ some day. Monica Ruehl, Director of Bilateral Relations at \ the Swiss Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), described \ the U.S.-Swiss Trade and Investment Cooperation Forum (the \ "Forum"), inaugurated by USTR and SECO in May. While still \

in its infancy, the Forum already has as possible agenda \ items intellectual property rights, a wine agreement based on \ the U.S.-EU model, and recognition of organic products \ standards. The Forum had passed its first hurdle in \ providing a platform to head off a potential U.S.-Swiss \ collision regarding drastic restrictions on U.S. beef exports \ to Switzerland. \

16.(SBU) Ruehl raised the issue of sanctions implementation. \ Reiterating Swiss points to Treasury Under Secretary Stuart \ Levey on September 14 (ref d), Ruehl described the Financial \ Sanctions Implementation Experts Group that had operated \ during the 1990s. Switzerland hosted the last meeting in \ November 2001. The USG was supposed to host the next, but \ never had. Ruehl stressed that Switzerland and others would \ be more successful in enforcing international sanctions if \ the actual implementers -- OFAC in the USG's case -- would \ meet regularly to discuss the mechanics of sanctions \ enforcement. Welcoming the proposal to revive the experts \ group, A/S Fried hoped that its scope be broad enough to \

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\ encompass organized crime and kleptocracy and agreed to \ contact Treasury to encourage revival of the Sanctions \ Implementation Experts Group. Embassy Bern also agreed to \ push the idea with visiting Treasury officials. \

----- \ United Nations Reform \

17.(SBU) State Secretary Ambuehl laid out Switzerland's three \ priorities within the United Nations: strengthen the overall \ UN system; promote reform in the budget and "cohesion" of UN \ agencies; and invigorate Geneva as a UN host city. Mindful \ of U.S.-Swiss common goals with regard to management reform, \ Ambuehl suggested that the two governments should introduce \ a proposal for outsourcing oversight functions (auditing, \ etc.) at smaller UN agencies, including the Bern-based \ Universal Postal Union. A/S Fried agreed that it was \ interesting and offered to run it by UN specialists. The \ Swiss agreed to provide the USG with a paper, which EUR will \ discuss proposal with IO and USUN. \

----- \ Muslim Integration \

18.(SBU) Addressing the challenge of Muslim integration, A/S \ Fried regretted that the prevailing radical character in the \ Muslim world was drowning out other voices. He recalled his \ visit to Denmark in the wake of the so-called "cartoon \ crisis." Initially, the West was as ill-equipped to deal \ with Muslim realities in Europe and the Greater Middle East \ as they had been with the communist threat following the \ Second World War. Ambuehl underscored Switzerland's relative \ success with Muslim integration, due to the country's status \ as a secular state with a highly decentralized system and \ republican, egalitarian structures. The Swiss population is \ 22 percent foreign born; of this, about 20 percent is Balkan \ and 5 percent Islamic, he said. The Swiss Government was \ working on two projects with regard to integration: the \ Montreux Initiative on transparent charitable best practices; \ and "Chantier Islamisme" involving the mapping of Islamist \ organizations and parties. A/S Fried recommended that both \ sides meet at the expert level to share information on \ outreach activities and to include Muslim integration as a \ regular topic in Framework discussions. \

----- \ Forum for the Future \

19.(SBU) Welcoming Switzerland's participation in the Forum \ and the Foundation for the Future, A/S Fried noted that the \ Foundation, designed to promote and subsidize civil society \ in the BMENA region, had had a slow first year, in part due \ to the Russian G-8 presidency. However, the Germans were \ promising to do more during their dual G-8/EU presidency. \ A/S Fried commended President Bush's recent UN speech on the \ importance coupling democracy with outreach. \

20. (SBU) Ambuehl shared the concerns of Foundation board \ member (and former Swiss diplomat and ICRC chief) Cornelio \ Sommaruga that the Foundation was not sufficiently light \ (agile) or transparent. A/S Fried agreed to look into it. \ When A/S Fried emphasized the need for Western unity \ vis-a-vis Hamas and Syria, Ambuehl countered that -- however \ difficult to deal with they were -- they remained a factor in \ the region. A/S Fried pushed back and urged the Swiss to \ allow pressure on Hamas to work. Ambuehl said he would send \ a DFA regional expert to Washington to talk about Syria and \ other regional concerns. \

----- \ Russia & Central Asia \

21.(C) A/S Fried also discussed Russia (particularly the \ energy-security nexus) and its neighbors. The arrest the \ previous day of several Russian "spies" by the Government of \ Georgia had not been handled well by either side, but \ illustrated our difficulties with Moscow; Russia seemed to \ want all of its neighbors to adopt the posture of Finland \ during the Cold War. Swiss DFA Deputy Poldir Anton Thalmann \ agreed that dealing with the Russians required firmness, \ expressing admiration for the performance of Alexander \ Vershbow and Nicholas Burns as NATO ambassadors. In response \ to Ruehl's question about Russian WTO membership, A/S Fried \ replied that President Bush would have loved to welcome the \

Russians in, but he was not willing to compromise the WTO's \  
criteria. \

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Next Meeting \

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22.(SBU) A/S Fried and State Secretary Ambuehl agreed that \  
working-level discussions should continue under the bilateral \  
framework and that they would meet in Washington during 2007. \

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Comment \

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23.(SBU) Swiss offers of specific proposals for cooperation \  
made the talks were more successful than anticipated. For \  
State Secretary Ambuehl, a formal Framework is important in \  
that it regularizes bilateral consultations and, as much as \  
getting the USG's attention, it is a means to ensure that \  
Ambuehl's boss -- Foreign Minister Calmy-Rey -- and their DFA \  
colleagues get into the habit of thinking about cooperating \  
with Washington. The Framework is also a way for the Swiss \  
Department of Foreign Affairs to keep pace with the \  
Department of Economic Affairs and its TIC Forum and Joint \  
Economic Commission. We will continue to use the Framework \  
to steer Swiss engagement into areas of mutual interest. \

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24.(U) This telegram was cleared by EUR Assistant Secretary \  
Dan Fried. \  
CONEWAY \